

We recall the Civil War era as Black History Month begins

Black History Month begins today, and this year coincides with the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. The Post-Standard observes the month by compiling accounts of Central New York African Americans who lived in the Civil War era, especially those who risked their lives on the Underground Railroad and those who fought for the Union.

Some names — like Frederick Douglass — are well known. Others are less celebrated, like Pvt. George Carpenter, who was born in Lysander and as a middle-aged farmer enlisted in the Union army



RINGGOLD
WARD

and fought in battles throughout the South.

The stories are compiled from local groups such as the National Abolition Hall of Fame and Museum, in

Peterboro; the United States Colored Troops Institute, at Hartwick College, in Oneonta; the Onondaga Historical Association; and The Post-Standard's archives.

Today, we begin with Samuel

Ringgold Ward, an abolitionist, clergyman and publisher who was a fugitive slave. In 1850, at a political convention in Oswego, he was the first black man nominated for national office.

Each report will be posted at Syracuse.com with links to resources elsewhere and to interviews and articles published in The Post-Standard during Black History Month in previous years.

On Sundays this month, we'll publish longer essays from local writers and historians about African-American life during the

Civil War era. Coming Sunday is a report from Douglas Egerton, a professor of history at Le Moyne College, who has written extensively about the era.

Find our Black History Month features at syracuse.com/black-history.

Sean Kirst talks with Lonnie Johnson, whose mother was a quiet contributor to the civil rights movement in Syracuse. She died last year. [A-2](#)